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The Bridge

Harding School of Theology

Spring 2015

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Harding School of Theology

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THE Bridge

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Everyone's Favorite Professor

In October 2014, Harding University announced that Dr. Allen Black would become the new dean of HST beginning July 1, 2015. The Bridge asked two of Dr. Black's former students to reflect on his influence as a professor.

If you didn't already know, Allen Black is "everyone's favorite professor." I've never heard him claim this, but apparently this nickname is common knowledge. As "everyone's favorite professor" transitions into becoming "everyone's favorite dean," it's appropriate to reflect on just what has made him such an outstanding figure at an outstanding institution.

Black is a masterful educator. He pushes students and has high expectations. But he is equally approachable and willing to give guidance in the form of encouragement and push back. He strikes an admirable balance between standard and current resources for class readings; professors in my Ph.D. seminars frequently mention books or authors whom Black had us read. His ability to integrate classic and current scholarship is just one way he excels in teaching.

Black also serves as a minister to his students. Students across a spectrum of churches come to HST, and at one time or another, many — maybe most — experience a crisis of some kind or another as they experience the inevitable growing pains of graduate education. These periods of growth can be difficult, confusing and even discouraging. Student after student, myself included, has found both comfort and direction from Black when studies and/or life seem overwhelming.

Having him as my adviser, being his graduate assistant for three years, taking at least one class with him per year, and serving on the Student Association during his two-year tenure as the S.A. faculty representative, I have spent enough time with him publicly and one-on-one to see how he truly practices what he preaches. He exemplifies the integration of ministry and



Black

scholarship, which is essential to HST's mission and the love for God, the church and Scripture, which he instills within his students. May God continue to bless HST through his servant as he has through so many other servants.

Kevin Burr (M.Div., 2014)

Recently, while meditating upon the text in which two men are walking to Emmaus, I was struck by this line, "While they were talking and
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HARDING SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY®

Admissions

800-680-0809

hstadmissions@hst.edu

Advancement

901-432-7723

hstadvancement@hst.edu

The Bridge editor

901-432-7714

HST fax

901-761-1358

Website

HST.edu

Vice President's office

VPHST@hst.edu

Dean's office

dean@hst.edu

Associate Dean's office

smcleod@hst.edu

Library office

dmeredith@hst.edu

THE Bridge

The Bridge is published quarterly by Harding School of Theology for alumni, students, prospective students, contributors and friends.

Editor

Sheila Owen

Contributors

Chris Altrock, Larry Arick,
Kevin Burr, Matt Carter, Rachel
Denzin, Evertt W. Huffard,
Mark Powell

Photo Credits

Josephine Albright, Matt
Carter, Ed Gray, Rhonda Gray

Harding School of Theology
1000 Cherry Road
Memphis, TN 38117

DEAN'S NOTE

Surrounded

Vocation does not come from willfulness. It comes from listening. I must listen to my life and try to understand what it is truly about — quite apart from what I would like it to be about — or my life will never represent anything real in the world, no matter how earnest my intention. (Parker Palmer, Let Your Life Speak).

I did not invest in three advanced degrees to become an administrator — I did it to preach and teach. Administration was not something I ever dreamed of doing, but it became a vocation surrounded by God. I listened and was blessed.

From my days of living in Jerusalem, the image of the temple mount surrounded by the Mount of Olives, Scopus and Zion remains vivid in my mind. Unlike the Samaritan temple on top of Mount Gerizim or the Parthenon on top of the Acropolis, Solomon's temple did not rest on the highest point. The ancient Psalm used this reality as a metaphor for God caring for his people: "As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people, from this time on and forevermore" (125:2). I see this image as a greater metaphor for leadership! Let me tell you why. (Though most people get up and leave at the end of the movie, please stay for the credits.)

As dean for the past 16 years, I have been surrounded by saints. I have been blessed with a wife who has been supportive beyond measure. Everyone knows how committed **Ileene** has been to sharing the mission

of the school, serving students and their spouses, and tolerating the crazy hours I have worked. I have been blessed by two extremely efficient administrative assistants. **Jane Tomlinson** served under all of the previous deans and blessed us with a sense of history and continuity — and has prayed for me regularly after she retired. **Brenda Curtis** became the rock with a calm and easy, yet very efficient, presence. **Steve McLeod** has served as an extremely effective right-hand man as the associate dean, managing the school calendar, curriculum, accreditation requirements and teaching schedules. There were **Student Association presidents** and **vice-presidents** who worked closely with me in serving our students and planning chapel. I have had some helpful **graduate assistants** along with the students who helped us coordinate the monthly Mission Interest Group meetings. **Sheila Owen** helped make *The Bridge* something we are all proud of. What dean would not want to be surrounded by this library and its **librarians**? As the first full-time vice president on this campus, **Jim Martin** has made the transition easy.



Huffard

Add to this the **faculty** and **staff** and you can see why the mountains are higher!

The rest of the story must include the 14-and-a-half years that I simultaneously served as executive director then vice president, acutely aware of constant support from the University. **David Burks** and **Lott Tucker** blessed us with their support as have **Bruce McLarty** and **Mel Sansom**. Add to that the offices of finance, business, human resources, public relations (producing *The Bridge*), advancement, IT support (**Dale Warren**), and E-Learning and you see the mountains I have seen.

Two more groups must be included: **supporters** and **students**. The alumni and donors who have given faithfully for years made a difference. We like to be surrounded by students! It takes a lot of faith and dedication to pursue a graduate degree with no financial incentive. This semester we are surrounded by 190 students who are graduates of 69 universities and colleges, living and serving in 27 states.

End of metaphor — the temple was destroyed in 70 AD. I have finished well! **Allen Black** will serve very well. To God be all the honor and glory!

Dr. Evertt W. Huffard
(dean@hst.edu)

15th Annual 5K Race

This year Harding School of Theology's annual 5K Run and One Mile Fun Walk will take place on Saturday, Sept. 19, 2015. This year is special because it marks our 15th year to hold the race. Anyone is welcome to participate in the race with staff, faculty, students, donors and others from the community. There will be the usual competition between students and faculty.

The winner is decided by a combination of the team's time in the race and the amount of money they raise.

Some who will participate in the race have no connection to the school, but they enjoy the event and return each year because they enjoy the event so much. Some participants donate funds beyond the required entry fee. One individual says that of the 25-plus events she par-

ticipates in each year, the HST 5K race is her favorite. "I love meeting the students," she says. "They are so friendly. The hospitality tent has the best food, and the race course through the neighborhood is wonderful."

We are looking forward to this year's race! If you are in the Memphis area, please join us.

Larry Arick
(larick@hst.edu)

The HST Connection

In June, the Advancement Office will introduce a new way to stay connected to our graduates. We will be producing a short video each month, which will be emailed to our alumni. This video series is titled the "HST Connection." You can expect to hear faculty, staff, donors, students and alumni

discussing the latest news, information and events going on around our campus. We hope this is a welcome way to keep you informed and up-to-date with HST.

For now this video will be used as a platform to communicate better with our alumni. In the future this medium has great potential

to reach our HST community as a whole. If you would like to receive this video but you are not yet on the alumni email list, please send an email to hstadvancement@hst.edu and let us know. We look forward to you seeing us soon!

Rachel Denzin
(rdenzin@harding.edu)

Everyone's Favorite Professor *continued from Page 1*

discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them" (Luke 24:15). It's quite an image — Jesus walking alongside these two as they travel down a path.

his followers have done this in my life. In particular, the image compels me to think of Allen Black. On numerous occasions Black has drawn near to me and gone with me,

On numerous occasions Black has drawn near to me and gone with me, providing pastoral care and godly wisdom for my journey.

They hadn't expected Jesus to join them. But he did nonetheless. And he transformed this journey into a divine encounter.

The image prompts me to think not only of the way in which Jesus continues to do this but also the way in which

providing pastoral care and godly wisdom for my journey. Years ago, while I was a student at HST in the M.Div. program wrestling with my sense of calling, Black drew near and went with me, eventually helping me to discern God's call to preach. More

recently, having completed my D.Min. at HST and now wrestling with the waves of a stormy season in ministry, Black drew near and went with me, giving wise counsel and supportive friendship.

This is one of the things I most appreciate about Black and one of the many reasons I'm thrilled to see him named as the dean of HST. Allen not only excels in academics and administration. He also excels in coming alongside current and former students becoming the hands and feet of Jesus in the good times and hard times of school and ministry.

Chris Altmann (D.Min., 2001)

BRIEFS

Save the Date

Sept. 11-12, 2015

Shepherds Network, "Breathing New Life Into Established Churches," hosted by the Church of Christ at White Station

Preconference workshop **Sept. 10-11:** "Shed the Light, Reduce the Heat: How to Talk About Difficult Issues in the Church." <http://www.lifeandleadership.com/shepherdnetwork>

Sept. 19, 2015

HST Run for the Son 5K

Nov. 14, 2015

HST Leadership Council Dinner

Register Now

Summer and fall registrations are open! HST students, connect with your academic adviser and enroll. The course schedule is available at HST.edu/syllabi.

We are accepting applications for admission for the fall 2015 semester.

Contact Matt Carter for admission questions: mrcarter@hst.edu or 901-761-1356. You may apply at hst.edu/apply.

BRIEFS

Looking for
Something to Read?

Here's what faculty recommend:

Allen Black

Prima Scriptura
by Clayton Croy

Dave Bland

Wisdom's Wonder: Character, Creation and Crisis in the Bible's Wisdom Literature
by William Brown

Ed Gray

Leaders Who Last
by Margaret Marcuson

Carlus Guppton

A Future for American Evangelicalism: Commitment, Openness and Conversation
by Harold Heie

Steve McLeod

Toxic Charity
by Robert Lupton

Don Meredith

The Stone-Campbell Movement: A Global History by D. Newell Williams, Douglas Foster and Paul Blowers

Richard Oster

From Republic to Empire: Rhetoric, Religion and Power in the Visual Culture of Ancient Rome by John Pollini

Sheila Owen

Home by Marilynne Robinson

Mark Powell

Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work by Timothy Keller

Kevin Shelby

In the Name of Jesus
by Henri Nouwen

Bob Turner

Tattoos on the Heart
by Gregory Boyle

Order on Amazon

Place all your Amazon orders through hst.edu/books. Every time you order through our link, HST receives a small percentage of the profit at no extra cost to you.

Doctoral Life

This spring we contacted the 30-plus HST alumni who are in doctoral programs, asking about their experiences. Here are some highlights:

Garrett Best: Asbury Theological Seminary, Ph.D. in New Testament with a focus on the Gospels

"I want my life to be used to serve the church, and I felt my vision lined up with the vision of ATS. Going through the process of applying to Ph.D. programs has reminded me what a great program HST offers and how it has prepared me not only for ministry but also for further study in academia."

Daniel Overton: University of Kansas, Ph.D. in communication with a focus on rhetoric

"Communication is widely taught at the university level, and it's a really flexible degree and field, allowing me to study very specific subjects of interest. My writing and time management skills — forged at HST — have made this an easy transition."

Clint Burnett: Boston College, Ph.D. in biblical studies

"I chose the subject of New Testament because of my work at HST with Drs. Black and Oster. My preparation at HST has enabled me to thrive in my doctoral program."

Nathan Bills: Duke Divinity School, Th.D. in Old Testament

"I am exploring how the theology of justice in Exodus connects with and/or critiques the North American church's practice and pedagogy of justice. The coursework at HST prepared me to handle the challenges of doctoral study. HST also

blessed me with a sharpened awareness and appreciation of my church tradition."

Tim Westbrook: Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Ph.D. in educational studies with a minor in intercultural studies

"This program allowed me to blend three areas of interest: theology, missions and education. Master's-level work prepares us to be dialogue partners with the scholars and theorists of our disciplines. Ph.D.-level work prepares us to be contributors of knowledge to this conversation. HST helped me learn the discourse and the tools for writing so that I could contribute to learning at the highest level of evangelical scholarship."

Sheila Vamplin: Lipscomb University, D.Min. in mission- and spiritual formation

"My thesis project will involve working with the full-time ministry team at my church and then evaluating the impact of our work related to spiritual formation. I had already done a good bit of theological study when I was at HST for my counseling degree. As much as I love counseling, the biblical and theology classes were what I wanted more of."

Steve Cloer: Luther Seminary, D.Min. in congregational mission and leadership

"I chose this program because I wanted a chance to engage with the missional church conversation and to

think critically about how to lead a church on mission. HST developed within me a strong sense of discipline and rigor that I was able to apply to my work, and it gave me a theological foundation from which to work as I focused on leadership, ecclesiology and mission."

Anessa Westbrook: Fuller Theological Seminary, D.Min. with a focus on female spiritual development

"One of the things I noticed from my training at HST was that I felt well-prepared in textual areas. I had something to contribute and more than adequate training in handling the text. They also did a good job preparing me to do research and writing at a high level."

Eric Suddeath: University of Mississippi, Ph.D. in counselor education and supervision

"At HST, I was challenged academically, personally and spiritually. As a counselor educator, my hope is to allow people to develop their skills clinically. But, even more than this, it is my hope to help counselors develop who they are as a person including their spiritual lives, emotional maturity and stability, examining and working through their own beliefs, values, biases and prejudices to provide competent and respectful client care."

Scott Laird: HST, D.Min.

"HST challenges me to grow spiritually and academically.

The professors are excellent in their fields, but they are also approachable, extremely supportive, and helpful to my ministry in Great Falls far after the class work has been completed."

Dorn Muscar Jr.: *HST, D.Min.*
"I chose to pursue a D.Min. to increase my effectiveness in ministry. I can honestly say I would not be serving in the capacity I am today for the Lord without the way the Lord has shaped me during my years of study with HST."

Lance Hawley: *University of Wisconsin-Madison, Ph.D. in Hebrew Bible*
"I chose biblical Hebrew because, while at HST, I became enamored with the theological perspectives witnessed to in the Old Testament and convinced that I needed to teach them. My time at HST was essential for developing my perspective and desire for ministry, which serves as my motivation for doing the Ph.D. in the first place."

Paavo Tucker: *Asbury Theological Seminary, Ph.D. in Old Testament*
"The HST community prepared me academically, but most importantly it prepared me spiritually and emotionally to be a better follower of Jesus and to understand the academic study of the Hebrew Bible as a spiritual discipline and ministry to the church."

David Ford: *Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Ph.D. in historical theology; Way-bright Leadership Scholar*
"HST has taught me how to think, to think critically, to ask questions, and to evaluate ideas from a variety of

perspectives. I am deeply indebted to the scholarship I saw modeled in my professors and fellow students at HST."

Chris Buxton: *Lipscomb University, D.Min.*
"I have total confidence that HST has prepared me completely and fully [for doctoral work]. I use my HST education every week in my work with college students in the WOLFLIFE Campus Ministry at Arkansas State University; it is invaluable to me."

K. Rex Butts: *Northern Seminary, D.Min. in missional leadership*
"Because of the growing gap between the Christian church and a postmodern/post-Christian culture, I am very interested in the missional church conversation. Rather than telling me what I should think, HST equipped me to think for myself in a theological and pastoral manner so that I am able to engage the various challenges of ministry."

Robert Perez: *HST, D.Min.*
"I chose the D.Min. at HST to reacquaint myself with many of the good people I met while I did my M.Div. from 1988 to 1992. I probably would not have come to Harding if it were not for Ileen and Evertt Huffard. I pray that by the time I finish my tenure at Santa Paula Church of Christ we can appoint elders and make our church a healthier congregation."

Steven Gaines: *University of Memphis, Ph.D. in communication with a focus on preaching and church leadership; Osborn Fellowship*
"What I learned in communication classes as an undergraduate Bible major

has helped me in ministry; I enjoy helping churches learn about communicating faithfully. HST increased my knowledge, passion and skill in preaching."

Todd Truax: *HST, D.Min.*
"Despite the fact that my undergraduate degree was in a field totally unrelated to ministry, when I graduated from HST in 1994 I was fully prepared to enter full-time ministry. After 20 years of full-time experience, I knew I could not go wrong choosing HST for my D.Min. degree. I wanted to use my doctoral studies to further my ability to effectively serve the Lord in his kingdom."

Terry Smalling: *HST, D.Min.*
"The professors at HST are second to none in their dedication and desire to function as a bridge between academia and the congregations in which we serve. The research skills taught at HST require students to dig into a variety of views before reaching an informed conclusion. The ministry courses, including the practicums, have introduced me to different forms of preaching and areas of serving that helped prepare me for doctoral work in ministry."

Phil Roberts: *HST, D.Min.*
"During fall 2012 I audited Dr. [Rick] Oster's Revelation and Contemporary Ministry. Reading the required books and articles prior to class reminded me of the thrill I experienced during the pursuit of the M.Div. degree at HST. Every one of my doubts, fears and concerns disappeared the first day of class. Before the first morning break, I felt like I had returned home."

BRIEFS

Alumni Note

Dr. John F. Kennedy, HST alumnus and former professor, was recently selected as president-elect of the Tennessee Licensed Professional Counselor Association. Congratulations and many thanks for your leadership in years past at HST as well as current state organizations and events.

Text Hotline Service

The Admissions Office has set up a text hotline service for prospective students and others with questions about admissions, housing, enrollment, etc. If you have a question, text the Admissions Office at **901-300-3995** or click on the "text us" button on the mobile version of the HST contact page.

Tweet Away

@hst.edu on Twitter



Harding School of Theology challenges Christian leaders to develop deeper faith in God and higher standards of ministry and scholarship.

BRIEFS

Faculty Notes

Congratulations to Dr. **Kevin Shelby**, counseling instructor, who successfully defended his dissertation in March. In September and October 2014, Shelby also consulted with the state of Tennessee on their Systems of Care Pilot Program and provided training for the implementing providers on this state initiative.

During the spring semester, Dr. **Ed Gray** conducted three premarital counseling training certification workshops in the Memphis area. He and his wife, **Rhonda**, taught in the Highland Church of Christ marriage ministry and conducted a marriage enrichment weekend and mentor training workshop in Chicago. They enjoyed getting snowed in for one of Chicago's historic snows this winter and spent a couple of extra days blessed by the hospitality of the church there.

In May, Gray conducted an in-depth training workshop at the Pepperdine Bible lectures, "Seniors and the Church: Respecting, Serving and Mobilizing."

Dr. **Mark Powell** presented a series on his latest book, *Centered in God: The Trinity and Christian Spirituality*, at the South Hills Church of Christ in Helena, Montana, and The Rising: A Minister's Retreat at Missouri River Christian Camp in Dearborn, Montana, in April.

Dr. **Allen Black** was in Thun, Switzerland, April 3-10 and spoke on the Gospel of Mark at a seminar for the Ministry for Theological Education.

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Interested in a Degree? Preview HST

Each semester HST welcomes prospective students to campus for Preview Experience. The Experience begins with a reception in the library where our guests meet and mingle with students, faculty and staff. After the reception, students tour the campus, ending up in the chapel for a conversation about degree programs, admissions and financial aid.

Prospective students enjoy a catered dinner at tables hosted by professors and students in their area of interest. After a classroom experience with one of our professors, our guests have a Q&A session with a panel of current students and alumni. With no

faculty or staff in the room, no question is off limits!

Our community welcomed 21 guests from four different schools for the spring 2015 preview day in February. Several of the prospective students have graduated from undergraduate studies and are working in ministry settings but feel the need for more training.

Our visitors were interested in Bible, counseling, ministry and theology. The counseling table was particularly lively at dinner as Dr. Ed Gray blessed the students with his wisdom and experience as a counselor and a professor.

After dinner, Dr. Mark Powell, professor of theology, presented a lesson titled

"The Holy Spirit: The Power and Presence of God."

Preview Experience is a great way to get to know HST. You'll meet a cross-section of our student body and have the opportunity for one-on-one interaction with faculty and staff.

If you have ever thought of entering graduate studies at HST, Preview Experience may be right for you. The fall date is not set yet, but you may keep up with these events at hst.edu/preview.

To be added to our email list for Preview Experience, send a message to HSTadmissions@hst.edu or text us at 901-300-3995.

Matt Carter
(mrcarter@HST.edu)

Campus Ministry Interest Group Formed

The HST Campus Ministry Interest Group had its first meeting March 3 during intensive week despite icy weather. Casey Coston, campus minister for Rebels for Christ at Ole Miss, was our speaker. Coston also serves as president of Campus for Christ, a national organization of campus ministers associated with churches of Christ. He shared his passion for working with college students, both to reach them for Christ and to help them grow to spiritual maturity. Other campus ministries represented included University of Memphis, University of Tennessee, Arkansas Tech, and Texas Christian University.



Kory Queen (Tennessee) at the Campus Ministry Interest Group

HST is pleased to partner with campus ministries in our apprenticeship program. HST students work part time with an experienced minister and receive practicum credit for their ministry work while they are part-time students. In addition to the schools mentioned above, current HST students are working either as apprentices or cam-

pus ministers at Arkansas State, Louisiana State, Western Kentucky, University of Arkansas-Little Rock, and the University of Arizona among other places.

To learn more about Campus for Christ, visit campusforchrist.net.

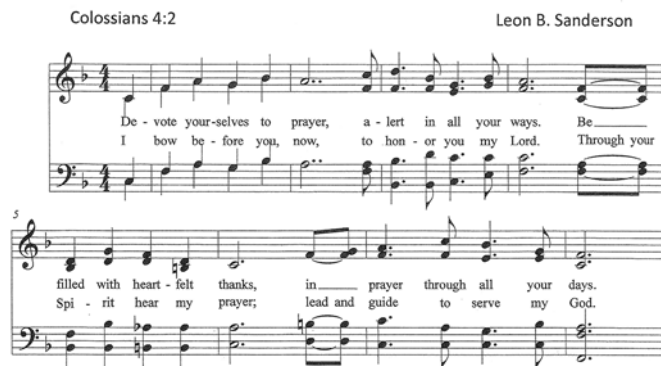
To learn more about apprenticeships, visit hst.edu/apprentice.

Sanderson Writes Song

As the spring semester ends and we move into summer, HST continues to work with our 2014-2015 theme, The Life of Prayer. Leon Sanderson (M.A., M.R.E., M.Th. and D.Min.), chair of the HST Alumni Association, Alumnus of the Year 2008, and co-author of the HST Alma Mater, wrote a song specifically for this year's theme.

DEVOTION TO PRAYER

Colossians 4:2
Leon B. Sanderson



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Solitude and Silence: A Devotional Guide

Texts for times of solitude and meditation

Psalm 37:1-11

- "Delight in the Lord," praising God for his nature, his acts, and his glory that is evident in creation.
- "Be still" and "wait patiently" for God, giving your concerns over to him.

Psalm 63

- Rest in God and God's love for you.
- Let God be your source of satisfaction and protection.

Psalm 139

- Praise God for his intimate knowledge of you and for his faithful presence.
- Pray verses 23-24 to God.

Psalm 145

- Praise God for his goodness to you.

1 Kings 19:1-18

- Praise God for being your strength and refuge in a chaotic world.
- Let God speak to you and work through you in the still quietness, and not just the spectacular.

Isaiah 30:15-22

- Repent of your sin and your attempts to be in control. Be quiet before God.
- Trust in God's grace and salvation rather than your own strength and plans.

Mark 1:21-39

- Like Jesus, take a break from your hectic schedule and be alone with God.
- Let your life be guided by God's will, not the desires of others.

Luke 10:38-42

- Take a break from your work (even your work for God) and spend time with Jesus.

John 15:1-17

- "Abide in" or "remain in" Jesus.
- Let the joy of Christ be in you and be complete.
- Ask God to bear fruit through you and help you grow in love.

Philippians 4:4-13

- Rejoice in the Lord and embrace God's peace.
- Ask God to strengthen you for his glory and service.

For some **ideas for practicing solitude**, please visit Across the Bridge at HST.edu.

Mark Powell
(mpowell@harding.edu)

BRIEFS



Shigeko and Masami Sagitani

In Sympathy

HST alumnus and long-time minister **Masami (Sami) Sagitani** died on March 6. For the past several years his health had deteriorated due to Alzheimer's. He and his wife were very faithful in attending the Ochanomizu congregation in Tokyo.

After retiring, he entered Harding University in Searcy followed by Harding School of Theology. Later he returned to Japan and worked with the Zoshigaya congregation in Tokyo for many years. This was the congregation started by J. M. McCaleb in about 1917.

Following this he and his wife, Shigeko, moved to Shizuoka, her home prefecture, and began working with the Shimizu congregation, a congregation started by missionary Sarah Andrews. Through his efforts this congregation was brought back into fellowship with sister congregations in the Shizuoka area.

As his health declined, the Sagitanis moved back to Tokyo and for a number of years taught an English/Japanese Bible class at Ochanomizu on Wednesday nights. He was always very conscientious in preparing for a sermon or class.

As his memory began to fade, he joked about it and saw it as a blessing in that he no longer had to worry about things he could not remember. Shigeko, his wife, was faithful to care for him and worked to keep him involved in the church family at Ochanomizu.

FINAL WORD

Learn More

Want to learn more about a topic mentioned in *The Bridge*? Check out the following resources:

Arnold, Bill T., and David W. Baker, eds. *The Face of Old Testament Studies: A Survey of Contemporary Approaches*. Nottingham: Apollos, 2000.

Arnold, Bill T., and Bryan E. Beyer. *Encountering the Old Testament: A Christian Survey*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.

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-----, *Missional: Joining God in the Neighborhood*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011.

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-----, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians: a Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011.

For help in accessing, borrowing, purchasing, or using any of these resources, feel free to contact us at the HST Library.

Sheila Owen
(sowen@hst.edu)